



# Welcome Aboard, Shipmate!

Welcome aboard to "FEARLESS" NMCB SEVENTY FOUR. You will find your tour in the best Naval Construction Force unit both challenging and rewarding. Life in the Seabees is fast paced and there is significant deployed time, but there is no better place to serve our great nation than with the "FEARLESS" Seabees of NMCB 74.

This package will give you some very basic information on NMCB 74's mission, command history, and organization, as well as information on the Gulfport area. Our goal is to do everything we can to get you quickly settled into the Gulfport area and this command. If you need something, please ask. Welcome aboard.

## History of NMCB 74

U.S. Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 74 was activated April 28, 1943 at the Naval Construction Training Center in Camp Perry, Williamsburg, Virginia. LCDR Fremont G. Elliot assumed command and led the Battalion throughout World War II.

"Fearless 74" served its country in the dangerous island-hopping campaign to reclaim Japanese held territory in the South Pacific. Often landing with the Marine Corps, the Battalion constructed support facilities on Tarawa, Kwajalein and Berlin Islands. For its outstanding achievement, NMCB-74 received the Navy Unit Commendation Citation before being inactivated Oct. 31, 1945, while in Okinawa.

Two decades later, the U.S. Navy called upon NMCB 74. The Battalion was recommissioned Dec. 6, 1966, at the Naval Construction Battalion Center in Gulfport, Mississippi, and adopted the motto "Does More." During the years from 1967 through 1970, the Battalion made four deployments to Vietnam. NMCB 74 served in various locations: DaNang, Cam Lo, Dong Hoa, Quang Tri, Quang Nagi, Chau Doc, and Bien Hoa.

On Aug. 17, 1969, Hurricane Camille struck the Gulf Coast. NMCB 74 received its third Navy Unit Commendation Citation for recovery actions following the storm.

During homeport in 1985, the Battalion provided assistance in cleaning up the Gulfport area from the effects of Hurricane Elena. For this effort, the Battalion was awarded the Humanitarian Service Medal.

In April 1986, the Battalion earned the Coast Guard Unit Commendation Citation for supporting the construction of a new Loran C station in Guam during a nine month deployment. The following year, NMCB 74 received the Golden Anchor award for retention excellence. The Battalion won the Golden Anchor again in 1993, 1998, 1999 and the Silver Anchor in 1994.

In December 1990, the Battalion was deployed to Ra's Al Mish'ab in northeastern Saudi Arabia in support of Operation Desert Shield/ Desert Storm. The Battalion initially deployed Dec. 3, 1990, to Suman Air Base, Bahrain, redeployed to Ra's Al Mish'ab in mid-December, and later retrograded to Camp Rorhbach in Al Jubail in mid-April 1991. Detail sites included Bahrain, Al Kibirt, Al Khafji, Saudi Arabia, and Suman Air Base, Bahrain.

Following an outstanding homeport, NMCB 74 deployed to Okinawa and the Pacific rim in March of 1993. The Battalion participated in Operation Cobra Gold in rural Thailand and

provided outstanding project support for Navy, Marine Corps and Air Force commands throughout the Pacific. As a direct result, NMCB 74 was selected the Atlantic Fleet "Best of Type" for fiscal year 1993.

In May 1994, NMCB 74 deployed to the Caribbean. With detachments in Panama, Andros Island, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, Vieques Island, Key West, Florida, Little Creek, Virginia, and Deployments for Training in Honduras and the Dominican Republic, the Battalion was tasked with a large challenge. In early June, the Battalion sent an Air Detachment of 89 personnel to Grand Turk Island in support of the 2,500 man migrant processing facility. Then in late June, they were tasked with sending another 89 personnel Air Detachment to Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, putting just over 200 of NMCB 74's finest, in support of Joint Task Force 160. The Battalion bore the brunt of constructing facilities to house 70,000 migrants. In 1995, after returning to homeport, the Battalion was awarded the Peltier Award for its hard work and effort. This is a highly prestigious award given to the best battalion among the eight active-duty battalions.

In March 1998, the Battalion re-adopted its original "Fearless" motto. In September 1998, the Battalion provided cleanup assistance throughout the Mississippi Gulf Coast due to damage caused by Hurricane Georges. Secretary of Defense William Cohen presented more than 200 members of the Battalion with the Humanitarian Service Medal.

In 1999, NMCB 74 was again awarded the Peltier Award, following a highly successful Caribbean deployment.

NMCB 74 has been selected "Best of Type" among the Atlantic Fleet battalions seven times during its history. It was awarded this honor under CDR Gordon W. Schley for fiscal year 1968, CDR James E. Bodamer in 1973, CDR Daniel B. Leonard in 1976, CDR Arthur W. Fort in 1978, CDR B. Daniel Neal in 1993, CDR Ronald W. Hertwig Jr. in 1994, CDR William M. Peacock III in 1999, and CDR Fran P. Castaldo in 2000.

## Deploying to Okinawa, Japan



# Map of Okinawa, Japan



# Arriving in Okinawa

The flight from the United States to Okinawa is approximately 20 hours long. There is generally a stop in Los Angeles and one in Anchorage, Alaska. From Anchorage, the flight goes to Okinawa. When you arrive in Okinawa, you will either arrive at the Naha Airport or on Kadena Air Force Base. Someone from NMCB 74 will be there to pick you up. If there are changes to your itinerary prior to your arrival or if you arrive early, call the Quarterdeck to notify your sponsor. If you get stuck at the airport, tell a taxi to take you to Camp Shields. Be sure to keep a receipt for future travel claims. It's a long flight over, come prepared.

## Morale, Recreation and Welfare

The Morale, Welfare and Recreation Club System in Okinawa boasts a wide range of excellent services and facilities. The activities provided by MWR include:

**CLUBS** - Clubs are open to all service members from any branch. Most clubs are open to all ranks. If you're going to a club for the first time, it's best to call in advance and ask what limitations, if any, might apply before you plan your entire evening around a function. Club services and activities vary from complete dining and catering facilities to quick, convenient snack bars.

**RESTAURANTS** – If you're hungry for a snack and don't want to eat at the dining facility, try one of the fast food restaurants on base or an off base restaurant.

**BEACHES GALORE** – Beaches and beach facilities are abundant on Okinawa. Some parts of the coast are predominantly sand, while others contain coral. Whatever the texture, all beaches offer an exquisite view of the sea.

**DIVERS PARADISE** – Diving remains one of the most popular sports among military people stationed on Okinawa. Few water enthusiasts can resist plunging into the sparkling emerald water off the Okinawa coastline. NMCB 74's MWR department has set up several dive certification classes and will continue as long as there is a steady interest. The classes run about \$130, and will provide all the necessary information and safety requirements.

**DRIVING RANGE** – The Kisaba Golf Driving Range is available to golfers seven days a week. A professional provides lessons to personnel desiring to learn or improve their skills.

**POOLS** – The Outdoor Recreation Department in Okinawa offers a great variety of activities for individuals who enjoy the outdoors. Nine swimming pools provide swimming and water aerobics enjoyment daily for thousands of people.

**ARTS & CRAFTS** – Another option of filling your days creatively is the Marine Corps Arts and Crafts program which can provide you with a sense of fun, enthusiasm and accomplishment. Hobbies include:

- Auto body work
- Woodcrafting
- Photography
- Pottery
- Cake decorating and more...

# Sightseeing

MWR offers several tours to Seabees throughout the deployment. Here are a few sites that the tours visit. **Go out and explore!**

**Mabuni Hill** – On Mabuni Hill, next to quiet cliffs overlooking the Pacific Ocean, there are 119 memorial monuments. The memorials are in honor of the men who lost their lives during the Pacific Islands campaign of WWII. The cliffs are known to some Americans as "Suicide Cliffs," because LT General Mitsuru Ushijima, the Commanding General of the 32<sup>nd</sup> Imperial Japanese Army, performed seppuku, or "hara-kiri," here. The other reason for the name is that it is believed many of General Ushijima's men jumped from these 500-foot cliffs when the Japanese were defeated. Okinawa's Peace Memorial Hall is just north of the cliffs. The hall houses the Peace Buddha Statue.

**Southeast Botanical Gardens** – The Ryukyu Islands are known for their tropical beauty and lush foliage. The botanical gardens have more than 100 acres of palm trees, tropical flowers and rolling hills. It is located just outside of Camp Shields. (It is walking distance, and well worth while.)

**Shuri Castle** – Shuri Castle offers an opportunity to re-discover the Ryukyuan Kingdom. Shuri, the capital city during the Ryuku dynasty, is a reminder of the island's history.

**WWII Japanese Naval Underground Headquarters** – After WWII, only a few structures on Okinawa remained intact. The Japanese Naval Underground Headquarters, honeycombed beneath the hill above Naha, was one structure that stood solid during constant U.S. bombardment.

**Underwater Marine Observatory** – The underwater Marine Observatory offers the opportunity to observe the Okinawa marine life close-up, without getting wet. Descending on a spiral staircase, visitors travel 25-feet into the East China Sea. There is also a shell shop, marine museum and a glass bottomed boat tour.

**Expo '75** – Ocean Exposition Memorial Park is dedicated to man's relationship with the sea and its animals. The park features an indoor aquarium, dolphin shows, a museum, foreign pavilions, playgrounds, gamerooms, picnic area, a large amusement park and a sandy white beach. The park is located on the Montubu Peninsula.

**Naha City Shopping Tour** – Naha is the capital city of Okinawa. This tour offers a trip to the markets of downtown Naha and is an exciting experience as well as a great chance to pick up souvenirs. Several stores offer samples of traditional Okinawan liquors and foods. If you are looking for something to eat, you will find American style dining and Okinawan cuisine including several dishes containing Soba noodles.

# Clothing Recommendations

Since the weather here is semi-tropical for most of the year, it is recommended that you bring plenty of summer clothing. There is no particular style of clothing on Okinawa, so don't worry about having the right kind. People here wear everything from T-shirts and sandals to sport coats and oxfords.

From the months of December through March the weather turns colder and calls for heavy sweaters or jackets/coats. During the rainy months, April to June, raincoats and umbrellas are a must. If you plan to travel to Korea or mainland Japan during the winter months, heavy winter wear will be appropriate. The climate in these two areas closely resembles the northern United States, complete with sub-zero temperatures and heavy snows.



# Deploying to Roosevelt Roads, Puerto Rico



## Arriving in Puerto Rico

Do **not** wear your uniform when traveling to Puerto Rico by civilian transport. Be sure, however, to bring all needed uniform items with you in adequate supply until your shipment arrives. The prescribed uniform of the day in Puerto Rico is CUU's.

Transportation to Puerto Rico is normally on commercial airlines arriving at the Luis Munoz International Airport in San Juan. It is important that you make prior arrangements with your sponsor to have them meet you at the airport, especially if there are any last minute changes to your itinerary. If you get stranded at the airport, call (collect) (787) 865-3327 (Quarterdeck). They will look for your Command Sponsor and if he/she is not there arrangements will be made and a driver will be sent to get you. Normal travel time from camp to airport is approximately 90 minutes. The estimated cost of a publico (privately owned taxi) is between \$80.00 and \$100.00. If you must use this method, be sure to get a receipt, as this is reimbursable on your travel claim. Your sponsor can not meet you inside the airport terminal. You should proceed to the baggage claim area. You will be required to show your baggage claim receipts before you can leave the terminal. Your sponsor will be waiting for you outside the terminal. Porters are available to help you with your baggage; the going rate is \$1.00 per bag.

# About Puerto Rico

"The Island of Enchantment" is the smallest and the most eastern of the Greater Antilles Island chain, which forms a border between the Atlantic Ocean and Caribbean Sea. The island is nearly 500 miles east of Cuba and about 1,000 miles southeast of Miami, FL. Roughly rectangular in shape, Puerto Rico measures approximately 110 miles east to west and 35 miles north to south. In area, it is slightly larger than the state of Delaware. San Juan is the island capital and the major metropolitan area. The island's population is approximately 3.6 million. Puerto Rico transforms into a great diversity of landscapes. Sunny beaches give way to upland rain forests and crammed urban highways intersect with country roads. This is a tropical island with consistent eastern trade winds. Roosevelt Roads Naval Station is located approximately 50 miles from San Juan and several local towns are located nearby.

## Puerto Rico's Culture

Puerto Rico was known as Boriquen to the indigenous Arawak Indians who had settled the Greater Antilles. When Europeans first settled the island in 1508, the prosperity of the Arawaks prompted the notion that here indeed was a "rich port". Imported diseases soon decimated the Arawak population. Deprived of laborers for their gold mines and due to lower crop yields, the European settlers abandoned their mines and plantations. A few colonists, administrators, and merchants remained in San Juan and Ponce, while most of the nearby interior was turned into grazing land for cattle and subsistence farming. Puerto Rico remained a Spanish colony for the next three centuries, but it never matched the prosperity of its neighbors.

Slavery brought the African presence to Puerto Rico in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, and there was a rebirth of European influences. Immigration movements first brought Viscayans, then Catalonians, and finally Asturians, Gallegos, and Majorcans from Spain. A network of new colonial towns developed around the coastal plains. Thriving on sugar and coffee production, Puerto Rico prospered. Spanish loyalists from South America and the Caribbean as well as French planters from Haiti who were fleeing the revolutionary movements and bloodshed found refuge in Puerto Rico. It was in the 19<sup>th</sup> century that the culture of Puerto Rico and its transformation into a nation of people with traditions and history was created. Before this time the island was so scarcely populated and the transportation system was so poor that the social contacts necessary for cultural and political growth were few. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century Puerto Rico changed in all its aspects; from under populated and almost self-sufficient, to an over populated and poor island with a national character in its culture, politics and traditions.

Puerto Rico was ceded to the United States at the end of the Spanish-American War in 1898. There was a population explosion in the 20th century that undermined the island's agricultural base and increased the need for structural and economic changes. The population rose from 1.3 million in 1920, to 3.3 million in 1985.

To escape from poverty and overpopulation, many Puerto Ricans emigrated as an escape. During the 1940s, the island experienced the start of a rural exodus and the capital of San Juan and other large cities experienced very rapid growth. Presently San Juan has a population exceeding 400,000, and Bayamon, the second largest city, has well over 100,000 people. Emigration to the United States began in earnest after 1950 and rapidly swelled to a mass exodus with the Puerto Rican government's incentive and patronage.

The Puerto Ricans are a mixture of four main races that have inhabited the island, the Taino or Arawak, the black African, the Caucasian Spaniard and more recently the American Anglo-Saxon.

## Things to See and Do

NMCB 74's MWR offers tour buses to Old San Juan over the weekends. The trip takes an hour-and-a-half, and is completely free. Old San Juan is a 475 year old neighborhood originally conceived as a military stronghold. The seven square block area has been designated a world class historic site by the United Nations. A leisure walking tour is recommended, as there is frequent heavy traffic. Some of the recommended sites include: **Forts:** *El Morro* rises 140 feet above the sea and has six levels. It fell only once in 1598 to a land assault by the Earl of Cumberland's forces. The fort is a maze of tunnels, dungeons, barracks, outposts and ramps. Completed in 1771 and reworked in 1783, the *San Cristobal* was El Morro's partner in the city's defense. Covering 27 acres of land (one-acre equals 4,840 square yards), the fort features five independent units, connected by moat and tunnel: each fully self-sufficient should the others fall. *La Fortaleza* was a defense against Carib Indians. It lost its military value and spent centuries as an executive mansion. The tower and gate were built in 1540, but the architecture is from the 1800's. The chapel, with its delicate mosaic tiles, did double duty as a storeroom for gold bullion.

**Museums:** The *Museo de Arte e Historia* showcases Puerto Rican art and music, including concerts and festivals. The *Museo Pablo Casals* is the Spanish master's legacy to the people of Puerto Rico. The museum collection includes manuscripts, photographs and a library of videotapes of concerts. *Casa Blanca* was built as a reward for Governor Ponce de Leon, who died in Florida before he could move in. His family, however, resided there for over 250 years. The Spanish and United States subsequently used it as a headquarters building. It's now a museum of 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> century family life.

**Historic Buildings:** The *Cathedral de San Juan* is an authentic and rare New World example of medieval architecture. Look for its elegant circular staircase and four vaulted Gothic ceilings. The body of Ponce de Leon has been kept here in a marble tomb since 1913, close to the mummy of a Roman Catholic martyr, San Pio, interred in 1862. *Iglesia San Jose* is the second-oldest church in the Western Hemisphere. It features many historic religious artifacts and a remarkable series of vaulted ceilings. Ponce de Leon's coat of arms hangs about the altar. The elegant *Teatro Tapia*, built in 1832, is one of the oldest theaters in the Western Hemisphere and still hosts a variety of fine arts including plays, ballets and concerts. The *Capitolio de Puerto Rico* was built in the 1920's to hold the offices of senators in one wing and the representatives in the other. The Puerto Rico Constitution, approved in 1952, is exhibited directly above a lead glass coat of arms.

## Puerto Rico's Natural Resources

### Manatees

Manatees are mammals with a seal shaped body, front flippers, and a paddle shaped tail. They can weigh up to 3,000 lbs. and measure 13 feet long. Manatees are protected by the Endangered Species Act. If you spot one in the vicinity, it's recommended that you exit the water until the animal has passed.

Naval Station Roosevelt Roads has been used as a release area for rehabilitated manatees. The highest concentration of manatees is in the waters surrounding the station.

### Coral Reefs



Coral reefs support a variety of marine life. Reefs offer shelter and a source of food for many marine organisms. These species include fish and invertebrates such as the parrotfish, sergeant majors, sea urchins, starfish, and the spiny lobster. The reefs are made of various types of corals. The most abundant corals seen in the waters off the Station are staghorn, elkhorn, brain, boulder and fire coral. Many of the coral reefs were damaged and destroyed by Hurricane Hugo in 1989. Fortunately, they have started rebuilding themselves.

## Personal Services

### **PERSONAL PROPERTY**

The personal Property Office is located in Bldg. 85, CBC Gulfport, and provides counseling for the packing and shipment of personal property and effects. Hours of operations are 0800 – 1500 weekdays. For information call (228) 871-2407 or DSN 868-2407. Inbound household goods are processed through Keesler Air Force Base. The CBC Personal Property Office can assist you with coordination of your move.

### **FAMILY SERVICE CENTER**

The Family Service Center is located in Bldg. 29, CBC Gulfport, and offers a wide range of people-support programs for all military, their families and retired military personnel. This service helps Navy people by providing information, resources, crisis and short-term counseling, career counseling, financial counseling, job workshops and classes, welcome aboard packages, hospitality kits, plus information on Family Support Groups and military installations around the world. During your transfer to NMCB 74 you may desire an area "Welcome Aboard" package specific to CBC Gulfport and the Mississippi Gulf Coast area. This information can be obtained by contacting the FSC at (228) 871-3000 or DSN 868-3000 and giving them your name and mailing address. This "Welcome Aboard" package will provide you additional information on temporary government housing and many of the other personal services available at CBC Gulfport, Mississippi. The information and direct referral line is (228) 871-2971 or 1-800-342-3525.

### **COMMAND LIAISON**

While NMCB 74 is on deployment, a command liaison remains behind in Gulfport. He is available to answer any questions in reference to our command. He is your point of contact while in Gulfport waiting to join the battalion on deployment. He will direct you to the local PSD, which has your departure information and he will assist you with any last minute problems you may have before leaving the states. The Command Liaison has an office in the Family Service Center at CBC Gulfport while the Battalion is deployed.

### **OMBUDSMAN**

The family plays an integral part in our overall success. To provide liaison between the Commanding Officer and NMCB 74 families, two outstanding volunteers act as Ombudsmen. They are available to provide assistance to our families when the need arises. We provide as much information as possible to the Ombudsman to reassure family members at home that their SEABEE is safe and well. The Ombudsman Program is "PRIORITY ONE" in our book and pays all of us high dividends.

# Professional Development

What do you want to achieve from your tour with NMCB 74? The answer to this question varies from one person to another. We want 110 percent effort from YOU and a dedication to the command, our mission and our fellow SEABEES. In return we will:

--Assist you with advancement. Prior to rating exams we provide an aggressive rate-training program every Monday and Wednesday. Additionally, we show you different ways to be better prepared to compete for advancement. The Professional Development Board is also available to screen and analyze your advancement progression.

--Participation in the **Seabee Combat Warfare (SCW)** program is mandatory and receives total command support. If you are not already qualified, you should qualify before you reach the half way mark in your tour with NMCB 74. Accomplishing this goal exemplifies a level of excellence and proficiency in combat skills, wartime survival and mission accomplishment.

--Assistance is provided for continuation of off-duty education. Through Tuition Assistance you can reach your educational goals. Continual self-improvement only enhances your value to yourself, the Seabees and the Navy.

--The **United Services Military Apprenticeship Program (USMAP)** is one of the most under-utilized training programs the Navy has ever initiated. If you're not presently working towards "JOURNEYMAN" status in the apprenticeship related to your rating, then you are taking money out of your pocket. Your tour at NMCB 74 will provide you ample opportunity to complete one or in some cases even two apprenticeships under this program.

So, what do YOU want to achieve from your assignment with NMCB 74?

## NMCB 74 Contact Numbers

DEPARTMENT	GULFPORT	PUERTO RICO	OKINAWA
Commanding Officer	871-2795	865-4752	732-4142
Executive Officer	871-2830	865-7676	732-4142
Command Master Chief	871-2549	865-4749	732-4142
Career Counselor	871-2335	865-5300	732-4017
Quarter Deck	871-2726	865-3327	732-4016/4018
Disbursing	871-2618	865-4825/4762	732-4074
Personnel Office	871-2728/2930	865-4755	732-4080
Chaplain	871-2454	865-3474	732-4191/4192
Medical	871-2818	865-4820	732-4030
Dental	871-2606	865-4821	732-4029
Red Cross	871-2483	865-3248	734-1294
Family Service Center	871-2581	865-4091/4097	734-3366
Navy-Marine Corps Relief	871-2610	865-3210	734-3927
Post Office	871-2258	865-4297	732-4019
Navy Lodge	800-NAVY-INN	800-NAVY-INN	800-NAVY-INN
USO	NONE	865-7275	734-3374

## STAY FEARLESS!